The International Journal for

THE EDUCATION OF THE BLIND

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Dates to Remember—Miss Marjorie S. Hooper, Managing Editor, 1839 Frankfort Ave., Louisville 6, Kentucky. (*The Journal* solicits advance information on the dates and location of workshops, institutes, conferences, etc., which would be of interest to our readers.)

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The Importance of an Occupational Choice in the College Adjustment of Blind Students

By Dr. Herbert Rusalem, Director of Research
Industrial Home for the Blind

The liberal arts college program has as its primary objective the development of the "liberal" individual, one who can view his world critically, arrive at sound decisions, and function intelligently, ethically, and morally in a democratic society. In this formulation, there is little room for vocational development. In fact, many college educators disclaim the vocational implications of their programs and avoid involvement in the student's vocational problems. Yet, reality often intrudes itself into this perceptual structure, suggesting that even the most dedicated liberal arts college cannot isolate itself from the occupational choices and preparation of its students.

The nature of this reality is most often the attitudes of college students and their parents. Whether liberal arts educators accept it or not, a college education is often perceived as a stepping-stone to a career. Entrance into college work, progress through it, the selection of a major, the planning of graduate study, and the use one makes of college learnings are all conditioned by vocational factors. Most students have come to accept the college as having multiple purposes, one of which is to clarify vocational goals and to provide training for vocational success. Even though some educators deplore this, the proposition offered by this paper is that some degree of vocational orientation on the part of the blind student and the college he attends can actually be a constructive dynamic in his educational experience.

College level experience with blind students is accumulating at a rapid pace. For example, in a recent survey, Condon[2] found that 54 blind students were in current attendance in twenty-four New York State Colleges and Universities alone. This experience has led college educators to an increased understanding of the potentialities and problems of blind students on the college campus. It has also led to the identification of student characteristics which seem to favor the probability of successful achievement in college setting. One of these characteristics is that of a firm and realistic occupational choice at the time of entrance into college level work.

It should be acknowledged that an occupational choice is not the only, nor even the major, hallmark of the successful blind college student. Indeed, there are numerous instances of blind students functioning at high performance levels without the attainment of a suitable occupational choice throughout the four years of undergraduate work. Yet, the early arrival at occupational decisions by blind college students seems to have a favorable effect upon a substantial proportion of blind college students. The values derived are these:

1. The reduction of distraction

Long reading sessions, protracted periods of intense concentration, dependence upon sighted help, and limited time available for leisure-time activities characterize the experience of many blind college students. It is almost a non-sequiteur to suggest that

1. Dr. Rusalem is also Research Consultant, Johnstone Training and Research Center, and member of the faculty of Hunter College.
2. Condon, Margaret E. "Blind College Students in New York State." New Outlook for the Blind. June 1961. 55:6:211-215.

it is much more difficult and time-consuming for the blind college student to perform his work than for other students. In effect, if he is to give the necessary time and energy to his work, the blind student must reduce the demands made upon him by other life tasks. Any distractions which can be removed from the life-space of a blind student leaves him free to devote himself more fully to his academic responsibilities. One of the crucial problems of teen-agers and young adults is the evolution of an occupational choice and plans for realizing it. This area of adjustment tends to preoccupy young people more and more as they approach adult responsibilities.

The blind student who enters college with a commitment to an occupation has the advantage of having completed this developmental task to the degree that it may not call upon his energies during the college years. This should not be interpreted as suggesting that all students, seeing or blind, should arrive at vocational decisions during the secondary school years. Occupational choice is a developmental process, which like other life processes, proceeds at differing rates in different individuals. The point is, however, the occupational choice process can be influenced by guidance provisions in secondary school. To the degree that school guidance accelerates the occupational choice and adds to its validity, it lessens the distraction of having to make these decisions during the critical college years.

2. Giving direction to learning.

Like all students, blind students delight in the process of learning, but like all students learning has to be meaningful to them. This meaning may come through a need to attain a degree of gestalt in an area of study, to obtain grades, to progress through college, or to perceive the learning as having a bearing upon one's life work. The latter purpose has proved to be one of the most meaningful of all learning frameworks for blind students. Having a vocational goal, the blind student is to relate his learning activities to the attainment of this goal and to perceive education as a preparation for a life career.

Not only does a vocational framework add to the motivation and self-discipline of the student, but it encourages individual inquiry, scholarliness, and adherence to high intellectual standards. Naturally, we would not want blind students to use vocational purposes as the sole vehicle for educational planning and participation, but in conjunction with others — the love of learning, the sense of achievement, the awareness of personal growth — it can play an important part in structuring the college experience for blind students. For some, it provides a direction that is more powerful than any other; for others, it supplements goals that are more abstract and general.

3. Assisting at college choice points

At various points in his college career, the blind student is required to arrive at certain choices. The most common of these is the selection of a foreign language, a science, or a math course, the identification of a major and a minor, the designation of individual courses comprising a unified curricular program in major and minor areas and the selection of elective subjects. Each of these choice points can hold great significance for the blind student. Making one choice rather than another can change the course of his life. Furthermore, owing to the investment of time and money in college work, some of these choices are irreversible.

In making these decisions, the blind sudent has need for an over-all philosophy or principle which will provide a rationale that is consistently applicable over the long run. One of the most effective of these rationales is that of occupational choice. When the blind student arrives at a decision regarding his career, he provides himself with a reference point that has the

attributes of practicality, importance, and immediacy. If decisions regarding curricula, courses, and subject matter can be tested against their relevance for the occupational choice, the student has a ready-made basis for his decisons. In fact, counseling experience at the college level indicates that some students are unable to arrive at choices of a major until they have first defined for themselves their career parameters. In many cases, the college counselor devotes considerable time to vocational exploration with the student despite the fact that the presenting problem is that of inability to select a major. The blind student who has made his vocational decisions seems better equipped to solve the problems growing out of academic choice points than the one who has not.

4. Facilitating the rehabilitation process

Most blind students attend colleges and universities under the sponsorship of state vocational rehabilitation agencies. Under current legislation and procedures, these agencies are required to assist their clients toward the attainment of remunerative employment. Thus, in undertaking a college program with a blind student, they are necessarily concerned with the vocational implications of the academic experience. State vocational rehabilitation agencies differ in their flexibility on this point, but almost all require some evidence that college attendance will contribute to the ultimate employment of the individual. The best evidence of this kind is an indication from the student that he has arrived at an occupational choice that is appropriate for him and that college attendance will facilitate the achievement of his occupational goal.

Blind students who, at the time of secondary school graduation, have failed to make even a tentative occupational choice may be delayed or deterred in obtaining the services offered by state vocational rehabilitation agencies. Yet, such services may be essential to the student's success in college from a financial, counseling, and training point of view. The blind student who is uncommitted to an occupational choice may encounter resistance to his plans, refusal to offer certain kinds of services, and a reluctance on the part of the state agency to work with him indefinitely on the college level in the absence of a realistic occupational choice.

In view of the importance of vocational decision-making prior to college attendance, schools and classes for blind young people have a special responsibility for helping them in this area. In effect, it imposes upon these educational institutions a clear-cut responsibility for conducting developmental vocational guidance programs from the ninth grade on. In addition to the usual components of a vocational guidance program — individual counseling and appraisal, group guidance, vocational exploration, and the introduction of relevant vocational materials into the regular school curriculum—there are some special guidance activities which schools and classes for the blind should undertake on behalf of their college-bound students. These include:

1. Involvement of the state vocational rehabilitation agency counselor in the school guidance program as early in the secondary school as possible. These counselors have had extensive experience in helping students in both college and industrial situations and can make a real contribution to the vocational guidance program of any institution for the blind. Their early participation in a student's program allows them ample time in which to help the student become aware of the demands which will be made upon him by the world of work and the state rehabilitation agency and the means through which he can best mobilize himself to meet these demands.

2. The introduction of work experience into the secondary school program. Work

is an exceedingly valuable educational tool. Most non-disabled young people engage in after-school, week-end, or summer employment, deriving from the experience a sophistication about work habits, work behaviors, and inter-personal relations on the job which contribute to vocational decision-making. As a group, blind students have fewer opportunities for work experience of this type. Whenever a disability sets up barriers which separate an exceptional child from essential life experiences, the special educator is called upon to devise procedures through which the limitation may be overcome. Among the plans which may be used in this case are work-study programs, the use of sheltered workshops, part-time employment on-and-off-campus obtained through the school's guidance services, and having students enroll as volunteers in various community programs. Community workshops for the disabled offer especially promising opportunities for summer employment when schools are prepared to share in the planning and supervision of the work experience.

3. The introduction of a planned sequence of prevocational experiences into the regular curriculum. Current research into occupational decision-making indicates that the arrival at a choice is facilitated by the possession of relevant occupational information. Much of this information is gathered in a casual and unplanned manner by non-disabled students through observations of occupation in the community, readings, television, and contacts with adults. These sources of information are less accessible to the blind child, necessitating the inclusion of occupational information experiences in the regular secondary school curriculum.

In many cases, the group guidance services offered by schools and classes for the blind are inadequate in so far as this purpose is concerned. Such classes need to be as carefully planned and conducted throughout the secondary school years as any other subject area in the curriculum. In many instances, group guidance is taught by poorly prepared individuals who devote relatively little time to preparing class sessions and who are remote from the realities of everyday vocational activities. It will be rare indeed for a school to find itself with a full-time person on staff really qualified to administer a group guidance program and in day-to-day touch with the rapidly changing occupational kaleidoscope of occupational life. An alternative is the employment of a consulting group guidance specialist who will most often be a counseling psychologist or rehabilitation counselor. In any event, the importance of vocational choice to blind college students is so compelling that we must do everything possible to raise the level of the occupational information service of the typical secondary school.

Summary

This paper has taken the position that vocational considerations play an important role in the college adjustment of blind students. It was suggested that the student who has made realistic vocational decisions by the time he enters college will have the advantages of reduced distraction, improved direction in learning, better decision-making ability at crucial college choice-points, and a more favorable relationship with the state vocational rehabilitation agency. In view of the benefits to be gained from having arrived at an occupational choice and the possibility that the school can facilitate the making of such choices, several means were suggested for the achievement of this goal. These include: the early involvement of state vocational rehabilitation or counselors into the secondary school program, the introduction of work experience into the secondary school, and the inclusion of a planned sequence of pre-vocational experiences into the regular curriculum taught by qualified personnel.

Can Rehabilitation Centers Serve Students from Residential Schools?

By Lyle Thume, Psychologist-Counselor
Rehabilitation Center, Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind[1]

For a number of years, much discussion and many questions have arisen concerning the emphasis that should be placed upon meeting the needs of former students in schools for the blind by rehabilitation centers for the blind. Policies in different states vary concerning referral of these students to the centers and they also differ in terms of the type of referral likely to be made.

We need to accomplish a more unified agreement among both instructors in the schools and rehabilitation workers concerning policies; furthermore, these policies need general interpretation to the students or potential trainees. The rehabilitation center's staff have a further responsibility to work with the former students they receive as referrals in terms of specific areas of prevocational experiences that need intensive emphasis, and to radically deemphasize other areas that are given more importance in the majority of cases of more recently blinded adults.

At the Rehabilitation Center of the Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind, operated by the Lions Clubs of Arkansas, we have made some collective observations over the years concerning the portion of our caseload representing former students of schools for the blind. To date, I know of no statistical computations of such data, but some of the generalizations are thought-provoking and certainly suggest fertile areas for research. In terms of meeting of specific needs, it should also be emphasized that these can be expected to vary noticably in a relatively few years.

The case of "D" was a highly outgoing, single, male high school graduate. He had had very limited practical experience in a home dairying project and there was little question concerning his possessing the academic aptitudes to enter college. The majority of his prevocational experiences represented social interaction with a group of people primarily different from those he had been accustomed to being with. There were many experiences developing sport and hobby interests along lines of bowling, etc., which added no new ability but stimulated the further refinement and development of the high level of potential which had already been recognized in high school. This development acted as a catalytic agent to his later achievement of college success.

The case of "W", a girl who was referred to the Rehabilitation Center in her late teens, represents one of the individuals who had not achieved beyond the late elementary grades. She possessed partial sight and a multiple handicap consisting of a partial involvement of her left arm and leg, resulting from an early incidence of polio. This made industrial placement questionable in the relatively rural surroundings in which she lived. In this instance the time she spent in the Rehabilitation Center helped to restore some of the confidence in her own ability to perform, which was needed to compensate for the fact that she felt herself to be an academic failure. Additional achievements were made in the areas of craft and mobility. While she had received previous exposure to many of these areas, the individualized nature of the Center's schedule permitted her to move at her own pace, and having entered the Center as an in-

dividual and not in a larger group of persons, she would find it relatively difficult to compare herself with her peers in either an undesirable manner or an overcomplimentary one. This did not lead to the development of spectacular skills but did permit her to refine some of the processes involving dexterity from which she would probably have eliminated herself if confronted by them in more highly competitive areas. At present, the results of this prevocational training have been some part-time baby sitting experiences, a few independent trips to visit relatives and other former trainees, and organizing a group in her church for occasional recreational activities at the Center. It is believed that these kinds of achievements represent the reaching of rehabilitation goals for members of society whose needs are great.

"B" was a totally blind, female high school graduate who reached her goals in three months of prevocational training in the center. They included independent travel, and specific references to cooking, sewing, and other aids that have since proved useful after her marriage and in the care of her infant.

The above illustrations are representative of an individual who could not succeed in school but was able to find marginal achievement in the Center setting, a graduate who continued her development of her greater independence, and a future college student who was given a more maximum advantage by prevocational training. In the case of the future college student, some of his associates at the Center included the former Mayor of a small Midwestern community, a holder of a Ph.D. degree, a former interviewer of a state employment commission, and a past president of a local Lions Club.

Another illustration is that of a graduate of the School for the Blind who had already completed his college work, who came through the Center indefinite concerning the goal of doing graduate study in the field of social work or seeking more immediate employment. At this point in life, his practical knowledge of the possible avenues toward upgrading himself professionally was limited. Counseling and some actual employment observation with field personnel in this local area is believed to have been very valuable in his later becoming a professional caseworker. If a part of this prevocational training had been worked out prior to college training, some of the later problems might have been greatly diminished. Many such preprofessional trainees have gained understanding of working with others by attending the Center for short periods in successive summers during their college years. In recent summers, the Arkansas Enterprises for the Blind has had recurring referrals of students at the end of their junior high school year. These are still few in number, but in one particular case the prevocational training occurring further away from some of the pressures of the student's home environment resulted in a firm vocational decision to enter masseur training rather than reaching an alternative goal upon which the parents had determined. Both alternatives were feasible and ultimately the latter may still be selected, but the intervening prevocational counseling will aid in causing the selection to represent self-realization on the part of the individual. In addition to making gains toward his independent mobility, the school administration reports significant academic progress on the part of this student during the senior year. While the Rehabilitation Center makes no claim concerning improving academic ability, a broader variety of experiences can result in a student making better application of ability which may have been more diffuse in the past.

Already much of the old feeling of a competitive relationship existing between the schools and the centers has been dis-

sipated. We can point with satisfaction to the progress that has been made in that direction. Most observers as well as former students of the schools are aware of the more than creditable job that the schools have always done academically. More recently, counseling services, information in both vocational and social areas of experience and mobility instruction are being included in the curriculums. On the other hand, the statement that the former student of a school can gain nothing but mobility training, if this is needed, by attending a center has also been refuted by the work that has been done with this group in a number of the nation's centers. Currently this latter fact may not be generally acknowledged.

The Rehabilitation Center believes that persons who have been in schools for the blind have a specific body of needs that can often be met in a center even when they already have some travel facility. Some of this represents a gradual rather than a sharp transition from the domicile school environment to accepting more of the freedoms and responsibilities that coexist in the adult competitive society in which we live. In this area, a heterogeneous social environment calculated to offer individual freedom in meeting needs in areas of specific skills represent what the centers have to offer the student group. This transition may be applicable to the college setting, the homemaker's role, or either sheltered or nonsheltered employment. The center should be even more aware of how these goal patterns may alter the needs of the particular individual in order to achieve greater success in adapting to them.

Much of this represents facts which may apply only to the specific situation and may not always be universally accepted. It will have achieved its purpose if it can stimulate thinking and more free expression on this subject with a minimum of bias. Beyond this, it would seem ideal if schools, centers, and state rehabilitation agencies, including counselors, home teachers, etc., could share a greater understanding of what goals are being sought and reached by each other. It seems that in the past neither the schools nor the centers have made maximum use of the resources they have to offer to one another in stimulating maximum development of the potentials of those with whom they work.

Dates to Remember

1962

January 1—Deadline on competitive proposals for AAIB Workshop Awards Fund.

April 10-13—Meeting of Council of National Organizations for Children and Youth for White House Conference follow-up.

April 11-13—National Society for Prevention of Blind Conference, Sheraton-Lincoln Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana.

April 24-28—CEC International Convention, Deshler-Hilton Hotel, Columbus, Ohio.

May 7-9—American Foundation for the Blind Public Relations Workshop V, Sheraton-Atlantic Hotel, New York City.

June 18-22—International Conference on Technical Devices by AFB in New York.

June 20-23—Nice, France, Lions International Convention.

June 28-July 2—AAIB Convention, Deauville Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida.

July 8-13—AAWB Convention, Pick-Carter Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio.

August 6-18—ICEBY Convention, Hannover, Germany.

1963

April 16-20—CEC International Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The Nur Ayin School for the Blind

By Miss S.M.G. Gaster, Headmistress

Nur Ayin is a school for blind girls and boys located in the ancient city of Isfahan, Iran.

The school's founder, a German pastor named Christoffel, was a pioneer in work for the blind in the Middle East. Originally, both he and his sister founded a mission for blind Armenians in Turkey. However, with the coming of World War I they were forced to leave that country and their work was ruined.

From Turkey, Pastor Christoffel went to Tabriz Azarbijan, Iran, where he founded two schools, one for blind boys and the other for blind girls. Things prospered here as additional young German men and women came out to assist him in his work.

After things were well organized in Tabriz Azarbijan, the Pastor went down to Isfahan and established two further branches for boys and girls. Once again things prospered and he was well thought of in Iran.

Again war broke out, this time World War II, and the school in Tabriz was closed. The Isfahan school then went through a period of terrible hardship, and it was only through the indomitable will of its founder and dedicated friends that it managed to survive. The story of the early struggles of Pastor Christoffel and his school is an inspiring tale.

Folk Dancing at the Nur Ayin School

The school today occupies a modern building erected from funds collected almost entirely in Iran. Princess Ashraf,

twin sister of the Shah, alone was instrumental in sending the school two million rials from the Shah's Imperial Charity. The management of the school is under the Diocesan Committee for the Care of the Blind, with Persian Bishop Hasan Daqani serving as its Chairman.

Our Primary School is today accepted by the Persian education authorities. When children reach the sixth class they are allowed to sit for the open examination. If they pass they go on to the high schools in the town. Actually, when they were first sent to sighted school, doubt was expressed as to whether they could do the work. So far, all have taken their places without difficulty among the sighted. One or two have done outstanding work and have thereby given a very good impression of blind children's adaptability. Eight children are attending high schools this year.

In addition to academic work and music, the school has a small weaving department which turns out hand towels and other cotton material on its five looms. Even though the equipment appears rough, the products turned out by our pupils are eagerly sought. In addition to weaving, there is carpentry, brush-making, and a sun-blind department. Music subjects of fered include instruction in the piano, accordion, violin, guitar, and singing.

Our children have a very full life during term time. They arise at 6:30 a.m., throw their bedding over the railings of the veranda, have breakfast, make their beds, have prayers, and then go to school at 7:45. They return from classes at 4:30 p.m. and have their supper at 7:00.

Each day they must transcribe their books into Braille. This takes about two hours, but it is the only way they can keep abreast of their work. As they go up through the school, more and more books are needed. It is hoped that these transcribed books may be printed for the younger children who are coming on. The difficulty is that the books change so often.

Nine of our children have joined the Girl Scouts and the first blind patrol has been formed in Iran. This past summer seven of these girls, accompanied by two of our teachers, attended a large camp on the Caspian Sea.

Our boys make themselves very busy outside of class hours. They keep doves and chickens and sell the eggs to us. They are fond of cooking supper over an open fire in the playground and sometimes invite a girl or two over to dine with them. Both boys and girls have sighted friends who take them shopping. However, girls in Iran are not allowed to go too far alone.

During term time, one of the blind women goes two or three times a week to the hospital to read and talk to the patients. On holidays our teen-agers take over for her and visit the wards during the evenings to sing hymns and say prayers.

The great weakness of our school has been in connection with our boys' and men's work. However, this year Dr. Jacob Van Weelden, well known internationally in work for the blind, has come to us from Holland. His purpose in coming to Iran is to explore the possibilities for providing work for our blind men and women. The money for this venture, we are grateful to say, is being provided half by American organizations and half by Dutch churches.

We are pleased to have on the staff of our school so many different nationalities and members of different churches working together: Iranians; English; a Jordanian; an Armenian; an American; and Dr. Van Weelden, a Dutchman. This group works under the Committee of the Persian Church and all receive the same scale of allowance. Each contributes his utmost to the furthering of the educational program for our children.

Braille Writing in Schools and Day Classes for the Blind in the United States

By Mrs. Rachel F. Rawls, Psychologist
and Mrs. Ethel E. Lewis, Teacher
North Carolina State School for the Blind

In order to study the most efficient methods of presenting Braille writing to children, and to obtain a basis for comparison of methods of doing this in our particular school with general practice throughout the nation, the authors decided to find out what equipment was generally considered to be most useful and effective by teachers of blind children. A questionnaire (found at the end of this article) was devised and sent to all of the residential schools for the blind affiliated with the American Association of Instructors of the Blind, and to a large number of day class teachers.

Seventy-one replies were received divided as follows:

TABLE I

RESPONDENTS TO QUESTIONNAIRE

	Number	Percentage
Day Classes	37	52.1%
Residential	34	47.9
Total	71	100.0

Questions were asked concerning the grade level at which beginning Braille writing was taught, apparatus used for teaching beginning Braille writing, whether or not the apparatus indicated was used for all beginners, and the grade level at which various writing equipment was introduced. The results of this survey proved interesting and suggestive as to the means employed by the majority of teachers and, presumably, considered most effective by these.

In most of the schools and day classes for the blind, Braille writing is introduced in the first half of Grade One. Since we did not seek information concerning the provisions made for a preparatory year before Grade One, we cannot tell whether the classes are introducing Braille writing during the first or second year of school in many cases. From some of the replies, it is obvious that there is a preparatory year before children go into Grade One, and this is found both in the residential and day classes. From Table II it can be observed that, of the total respondents, 48 or 67.6 per cent are introducing Braille writing in Grade One during the first half of the year. A few schools are introducing it in the kindergarten, and some are waiting until the latter part of the first grade to introduce Braille writing.

In an overwhelming majority of the schools, the Perkins Brailler, or some other type of Brailler, is used to teach beginning writing. There were only five replies which indicated that any type of slate was used. Only one school introduces Braille writing with a slate and stylus in the kindergarten. One other residential school uses the pocket slate, but they delay introducing Braille writing until the first grade, although they introduce Braille reading in the kindergarten. One of the day classes uses either the Perkins Brailler or a small desk slate for beginning writing, but all

TABLE II

GRADE LEVEL AT WHICH BRAILLE WRITING IS INTRODUCED

Grade Level	Day Classes	Residential Classes	Total
First half of kindergarten	1	1	2
Second half of kindergarten	7	5	12
First half of Grade 1	26	22	48
Second half of Grade 1	2	4	6
Grade 2	1		1
When child is ready		1	1
Questionable response		1	1

of the other day classes used Braillewriters of some type. It is apparent from this survey that the vast majority of schools and day classes for the blind find Perkins or Hall Braillers more satisfactory than any type of slate for teaching small children to write Braille. Table III summarizes the findings about apparatus used to teach beginning students to write Braille.

In 34 day classes and 22 residential classes (Table IV), or 92.9 per cent of the total responding schools, it will be observed that all beginners are taught to write on the Braillewriter. In a few instances, only the younger beginners are taught on the Braillewriter, and in a few instances most, but not all, beginners are taught to use the Braillewriter first.

From the questions concerning the grade level at which various writing apparatus is introduced, findings are summarized in Table V. Most of the classes in both residential and day schools introduce either the Perkins Brailler or some other type of Brailler in the first grade. The majority of the day classes continue to use this type of instrument. Many of the classes in residential schools introduce some type of Brailler other than the Perkins in the second grade, when this has not been done before. Slates of all types—large and small desk slates and pocket slates—are generally introduced in Grade Three.

Although this survey was primarily concerned with Braille writing equipment, one question was introduced asking about

TABLE III

APPARATUS USED FOR TEACHING BEGINNING BRAILLE WRITING

Apparatus	Day Classes	Residential Classes	Total
Perkins or other Brailler	36	30	66
Large Desk Slate		1	1
Small Desk Slate		1	1
Pocket Slate		2	2
Brailler and/or Small Desk Slate	1		1

TABLE IV

INTRODUCTION OF BEGINNERS TO USE OF BRAILLE WRITERS*

	Day Classes	Residential Classes	Total
All beginners	34	22	56
All younger beginners		4	4
Most but not all beginners	2	3	5
Half of beginners		1	1
Varies	1		1

* Two residential schools reported the pocket slate was used for all beginners, one residential school reported the small desk slate was used for all younger beginners, and one residential school reported that the large desk slate was used to teach most beginners.

TABLE V

GRADE LEVEL AT WHICH WRITING EQUIPMENT IS INTRODUCED

		Kind.	1	2	3	4	5	6	6+	Grade Undetermined	Grade Most Frequent
Perkins Brailler	Day Cl.	8	29	1							1
	Res. Cl.	3	22	4						1	1
	Total	11	51	5						1	1
Other Brailler	Day Cl.	1	5		1						1
	Res. Cl.	1	3	4	1	2				1	2
	Total	2	8	4	2	2				1	1
Large Desk Slate	Day Cl.				8	2	2	3		1	3
	Res. Cl.		1	3	4	1	1				3
	Total		1	3	12		3	3		1	3
Sm. Desk Slate	Day Cl.			1	9	5	4	2	1	1	3
	Res. Cl.		2	5	3	2					2
	Total		2	6	12	7	4	2	1	1	3
Pocket Slate	Day Cl.				8	2	6	2	3	1	3
	Res. Cl.	1	1	5	10	7	1	1	1		3
	Total	1	1	5	18	9	7	3	4	1	3
Typewriter	Day Cl.			2	9	9	5	1	2		4
	Res. Cl.				2	23	7	12	8		4
	Total			2	11	32	12	13	10		4

TABLE VI

INTRODUCTION OF BRAILLE READING AND WRITING COMPARED

	Day Classes	Residential Classes	Total
Braille writing and Braille reading introduced simultaneously	24	20	44
Braille reading introduced first	9	14	23
Braille writing introduced first	3		3

the introduction of typewriting. The average class level at which typing is introduced is Grade Four. A number of day classes introduce it at the second grade level, however, and it can also be noted that many of them introduce typing by the third grade. The necessity for this in a public school where children attend classes with sighted children can be easily understood. Some residential schools delay introduction as late as the sixth grade and, in a few cases, even later. This was one of the principal differences observed between the practices current in day classes and residential schools.

Table VI shows that the majority of the classes introduce Braille reading and writing at the same time. Not quite a third of the day classes introduce Braille reading first; more than a third of the residential schools introduce Braille reading before introducing writing. Three of the day classes indicated that Braille writing was introduced prior to Braille reading.

From this survey, it is obvious that most teachers find the introduction of a Braillewriter more conducive to building writing skills than starting children on any type of Braille slate. This seems to be in line with the observation of many developmental psychological studies that indicate that grosser motor skills develop before finer movements. It is the practice of most of the schools replying to the survey to start younger children on the Braillewriter.

Less definite conclusions about current practices in some other areas can be drawn. By the third grade, most of the classes seem to find pupils ready to use some type of slate. There is little general agreement on whether some type of desk slate or a pocket slate should be next introduced, according to this survey. Typewriting tends to be introduced somewhat earlier in public school day classes than in residential schools, but it is most frequently introduced in the fourth grade by both groups.

The majority of classes in both groups introduce reading and writing at approximately the same time, but a substantial number (32.4 per cent) introduce reading before starting to establish writing habits.

Replies to the last question on the questionnaire concerning the number of words, letters and signs learned by pupils during the first year were so inconclusive as to make tabulation impossible. A clearer statement of this might be devised, and a group of children studied closely, to make determination of reasonable expectations in this regard at a later date.

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STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND
Raleigh, North Carolina

QUESTIONNAIRE ON TEACHING BEGINNING BRAILLE WRITING

1. At what time do you introduce Braille Writing to beginning pupils? (Please check)
   First half year Kindergarten_____ Second half year Kindergarten_____
   First half year Grade One_____ Second half year Grade One_____
   Grade Two_____ Later than Grade Two_____
2. What apparatus is used to teach Braille Writing to beginners?
   Perkins Brailler_____ Small Desk Slate_____
   Other Type Braillewriter___ Pocket Slate _____
   Large Desk Slate_____ _____
3. Is the above type of apparatus used for: All beginner writers_____ All younger beginners_____ Most beginners, but not all_____
   About half the beginners_____
4. At what grade level do you introduce the following:
   Perkins Brailler_____ Small Desk Slate_____
   Other Braillewriters_____ Pocket Slate_____
   Large Desk Slate_____ Regular Typewriter_____
5. Is Braille Reading and Writing introduced at approximately the same time?

   _____

   _____
6. Approximately how many Braille letters can an average beginning pupil write at the end of the first year? _____ Braille signs _____
   Braille Words _____?
   Gifted Pupil:
   Letters_____ Words_____ Signs_____
   Slow learner:
   Letters_____ Words_____ Signs_____

We shall appreciate your assistance in completing this questionnaire very much.

Programmed Instruction in Braille

By Samuel C. Ashcroft, Ed.D.
Associate Coordinator in Special Education
George Peabody College for Teachers

Throughout the literature on the education and rehabilitation of the blind there are frequent and urgent pleas for well prepared teachers and other workers. A requisite of effective preparation is mastery of the essentials of reading and writing in Braille and good attitudes toward this important medium. The attainment of this mastery and healthy attitudes is a formidable task to many persons who are

or would like to be working with blind children. It is especially difficult if basic mastery of Braille must be acquired quickly or in addition to other duties.

Those who have responsibility for providing opportunities for individuals to acquire skill in the essentials of reading and writing in Braille are frequently faced with many problems which make them ask questions like the following: "What are the most effective ways to teach Braille?" "How can motivation to high achievement be developed in learning to use Braille?" "How can problems be avoided which develop out of pressure to achieve Braille mastery quickly?"

For the past five summers, Peabody College has provided a standard course which enrolls from 15 to 20 persons who want to attain basic mastery of Braille in five weeks while taking a normal load of other courses. In four summers of this experience it has been observed that some students develop emotional problems, irrational behavior occurs, and other side effects are evident as people under pressure try to learn to use Braille in a short time. Many solutions to these problems have been tried. Different administrative arrangements have been attempted. Different approaches to teaching and learning have been explored. Supplementary help has been provided. However, the problems persisted. During the summer of 1960, it was agreed that something relatively more drastic should be attempted to achieve a break-through in solving these problems. The proposed solution was simple but proved effective and seems worth sharing with others.

It was agreed that if a text utilizing basic principles of learning and teaching could be developed, some of the problems might be solved. Taking cues from recent interest in the development of teaching machines, it was concluded that a fruitful attempt might be made to *program* instruction in Braille using the features of programming for teaching machines.

An outline was prepared which divided the Braille code into 8 units for instructional purposes. Faculty members and volunteer graduate students followed instructions for developing a teaching-machine-type program for the content of each of the units. By the end of the summer term, a crude draft of a text had been developed programming instruction in Braille. These units or contracts, as they came to be called, were reworked for editorial consistency, unification of approach, and accuracy. By September a second draft was completed in a form adequate for use in the fall offering of the course. This edition of the text was used with the eight college students who were taking "Reading and Writing in Braille." An enthusiastic response to this approach was immediately evident. Each student was allowed to work at his own rate and to make a contract with the instructor for the units of learning as he felt ready for them. As he completed a contract, he was encouraged to take a unit test and proceed with the next if he had attained adequate mastery. The results of this pilot study suggested the value of the plan. It was decided to refine the text further, utilizing constructive criticisms provided by those who had used it. These and other suggestions were implemented in a third draft for use in the summer of 1961.

The most important features of the present approach are:

1. The presentation of small, logically sequential increments of material to be learned: Each Contract or unit is broken down into five or more "cycles." Each cycle presents the material to be learned with a key sentence or phrase to facilitate learning. The key is followed by exercises for reading and writing meaningful material. Provision is made for additional practice as indicated by individual needs for mastery.

2. Each contract utilizes what has been previously learned but does not require the use of any forms or rules not yet presented: Repetition is provided in each contract by using previously learned material along with the newly learned material to assure retention.

3. All instructions are self-explanatory so that the individual may work independently or with the assistance of an instructor: Students are enabled to progress at their own pace since the materials are virtually self-administering. If teachers are available, they may devote their time to individualizing instruction, stimulating and motivating progress, or checking contract tests.

4. Provision for prompt personal checking by the student on accuracy of learning: Each practice exercise is accompanied by a facsimile Braille answer key for immediate knowledge of accuracy, success, and self-progress.

5. The approach conforms to ENGLISH BRAILLE, AMERICAN EDITION, 1959, AND ITS 1960 ADDENDA: The text can be used in association with this manual, the approach is up-to-date, and in conformity with the latest official reference of the Braille Authority. Supplemental explanation may be obtained from this resource.

6. A series of contract tests are available for personal check by the students on mastery of each contract. A final examination has been developed to check on complete mastery. Immediate and continuous knowledge of progress and diagnosis of difficulty are provided through periodic check tests. A comprehensive final appraises progress through the whole course. These tests have been validated against a proficiency test accepted for college credit.

For the five-week 1961 summer session term, there was available an enrollment of 16 in the course in order to give the approach a crucial test. It should be noted that the membership of the class spanned a wide range of individual differences in aptitude and experience. Some had previous knowledge of Braille, and others were completely naive.

In order to have objective criteria on which to evaluate the success of the plan, the instructor gathered data on the progress of each of the students. Each student took eight contract tests and a comprehensive final examination on the whole content of the course. As an additional check, each student was asked to take a proficiency test. The proficiency test referred to is an instrument developed in many forms in order to provide a way of giving college credit for previous experience with Braille or for qualifying experienced Braillists as a prerequisite for taking an advanced course in Braille teaching procedures. Experience with the proficiency test indicated the criterion of proficiency requisite to basic mastery or the pursuit of further course work. This criterion was used for validation of the approach in programmed instruction in Braille. The data which follow result from the eight contract tests, from the course final examination, and from the proficiency test taken shortly after the completion of the five-week course.

Scores on the eight contract tests for the 16 students ranged from individual averages of 1.5 errors per test to 6.6 errors per test. The results of the final course examination show that the 16 students' scores ranged from one to 12 errors with an average of 4.56 errors and a standard deviation of 3.17 errors. Scores on the proficiency examination ranged from 0 to 10 error with a mean of 3.38 errors and a standard deviation of 2.89 errors.

Correlations among the three types of test scores were computed. The contract tests correlated with the proficiency test .90. The correlation between the proficiency test and the course final examina-

tion was .77. The correlation between the contract tests and the course final examination was .73. These correlation coefficients are taken as satisfactory evidence of the validity of the approach to mastery of the basic essentials in reading and writing Braille.

Of more importance than the statistical evidence of the value of this approach is the subjective evidence that accrued. Comments of the students provided in voluntary, confidential evaluation sheets at the end of the course yield additional evidence.

The first question on the evaluation form was "What features do you like best about the text?" Sample answers were: "Self-help", "self-evaluation", "small learning steps"; "Self-teaching possibilities and lesson development"; "Individualized approach, easily interpreted directions and self-diagnosis provide good motivation"; "Small increments to learn, immediate reward, and self-spacing"; "Spaced practice, review, and restatement"; "Order, exercises, immediate check on accuracy"; "Summary pages, review at a glance"; "Own rate, clarity of rules, repetition of rules"; "Contract form, summary at end of each contract, quick review"; "Exercises, opportunity to go at own rate, clarity of explanation and repetition of rules"; "Individualization, small steps in learning, immediate knowledge of mistakes".

The second question asked was, "What features do you like least about the text?" Sample answers follow. "The amount on each page could have been spaced better — especially the Braille pages"; "The dittoed form in which it was presented, final tests at the end of contracts not covering *all* of the materials in the contract"; "Errors in the text"; "Errors, typing errors were at times confusing, and Brailled check sheets not always clear copies because of ditto print"; "Fails to emphasize importance of reading of Braille"; "Need checking sheets to be separate for easier checking, especially in early stages of course"; "In some places rules could be more concise and meaningful"; "Rules should be easier to find, perhaps printed in distinctive type"; "Only criticism I have is in regard to contract six"; "The text was handed out in loose leaf form at times"; "The Braille correcting or checking sheets were very hard to read"; "There were many errors, mostly in the typing."

The third question asked was: "What major changes would you recommend?" "Editing, printing, and binding"; "None"; "At the end of contract five, after all short forms have been reviewed, please list all initial letters for short forms, too, which have been given thus far"; "Could the rules be presented something like the Ten Commandments — a simple statement in bold print followed by an explanation"; "perhaps a more careful analysis (of rules) would help — hence more concise statement"; "The rules in contract eight could be more clear."

Even more satisfying evidence of the value of this approach comes from the subjective evaluation of the course instructor, and the coordinator of the college program. As pointed out earlier, previous experience led to the anticipation that many kinds of problems would arise in expecting five-week summer students to master the basic essentials of the Braille code. Symptoms of such problems were minimized during the 1961 summer session when this approach was implemented. No one dropped the course as one or two usually do. No one failed the course as some occasionally do. The students seemed to feel positively toward the Braille medium and to look forward to using their knowledge.

Some limitations on this approach must be recognized. First of all, it is useful only with those who know how to read and write in *print* already. This approach *should not* be used with very young children or those who have not learned how to read or write previously in some medi-

um, either Braille or print. Furthermore, the approach is intended to provide a step toward complete mastery and facility. It does not purport to produce all the competencies needed by a teacher, a transcriber, or a parent. However, it is an efficient and comfortable way to take the first giant stride toward competencies needed by such people.

In response to a pressing need to solve some urgent problems connected with a college course in reading and writing Braille, a specialized text for the purpose was prepared. The text was modeled after principles of programming instruction for use with teaching machines. The text provides for independent mastery of small units of instruction with adequate practice for mastery and immediate knowledge of success.

Evidence of the validity of the approach is available through comparison of scores obtained in eight contract tests, a course final examination, and a proficiency examination. School teachers, home teachers, parents, volunteer transcribers, Braillists, rehabilitation workers and others who need quickly to acquire Braille skills and positive attitudes toward the medium should find very useful the plan on which this text is based.

Discriminability of Tactual Patterns[1]

By June E. Morris, M.A., and Carson Y. Nolan, Ph.D.

Department of Educational Research
American Printing House for the Blind

This study is part of an effort to determine an adequate tactual symbolism for the blind which could be used graphically in combination with Braille. Braille, which is highly developed and standardized, fills the requirement for embossed verbal communication. However, means available for embossed graphic communication, i.e. through maps, graphs, charts, and diagrams, are still relatively crude. Lack of identification of clearly discriminable tactual symbols and lack of knowledge of factors that determine tactual figure-ground relations have seriously impeded development in this area.

Three types of symbols—areal, linear, and point—are needed for graphic communication. The number of discriminable tactual symbols possible in any given size appears dependent upon the medium in which the symbols are reproduced. For example, the number of small symbols which can be reproduced through embossing paper is extremely limited. In a previous study, Heath (1958) explored the usefulness of Virkotype printing for the reproduction of tactual graphics and successfully identified discrete tactual symbols for area. However, methodological problems restricted the number of discrete symbols identified to below an acceptable minimum. The present experiment was set up as an extension of Heath's.

The purpose of this study was to test empirically a group of twelve areal type tactual patterns, reproduced in Virkotype, for discriminability and to test whether any difference exists in the ability of blind children to discriminate these patterns as related to their grade placement, sex, IQ, or chronological age.

Method

Subjects

Ninety-six legally blind students, grades

1. Much of the material presented in this paper is taken from an MA thesis written by the senior author at the University of Louisville under the direction of Dr. Raymond A. Kemper, 1960.

4-12, from the Missouri School for the Blind and the Illinois Braille and Sight-Saving School served as subjects. These were selected so that there were 12 boys and 12 girls from each of the following grade groups: 4th and 5th; 6th and 7th; 8th and 9th; 10th, 11th, and 12th.

No subject was used from grades below the fourth, as a previous study (Nolan, 1960) had indicated that children's ability to make tactual discriminations does not fully develop until they are in about the fourth grade. The subjects were all Braille readers who were doing adequate classroom work.

Experimental Materials

Twelve tactual patterns were printed in Virkotype which utilizes a plastic ink to achieve a high embossed effect. Some of these were those Heath had found discriminable, while the others were selected visually in terms of their being different from any of the Heath group. Each pattern was reproduced as a 2-inch square centered on paper 2½ x 4 inches. These were systematically assembled in a paired-comparison arrangement and mounted on 5 x 8 inch cards. The right-left positions of the patterns were varied deliberately so that each pattern would appear an equal number of times on either side. The pairs were then randomly assigned their ordinal positions and numbered accordingly. The entire set was comprised of 78 stimulus cards, each pattern being compared once with itself as well as once with each of the other eleven patterns. The test was preceded by two sample items, one displaying like patterns and the other unlike patterns.

Experimental Design

The test was administered to each subject individually. A one-minute maximum time limit was stipulated for each test item. This proved more than adequate. Those subjects who had enough residual sight to visually perceive the stimuli were blindfolded. The stimulus cards were presented with the two patterns to be examined in a horizontal position. The subjects were permitted to use either or both hands and to examine the stimuli at will. Subjects were required to judge whether the pair of stimuli on each card was "alike" or "not alike".

TABLE 1

MEAN CORRECT RESPONSES AND THEIR STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE TOTAL GROUP AND FOR EACH OF THE FOUR SUB-GROUPS IN THE STUDY

Grades	Sex					
	Girls		Boys		Totals	
	Means	S. D.	Means	S. D.	Means	S. D.
4 and 5	70.6	3.90	68.6	6.69	69.6	5.57
6 and 7	67.0	8.88	70.2	5.39	68.6	7.52
8 and 9	71.4	4.96	73.2	3.98	72.3	4.58
10, 11, and 12	73.4	3.71	71.3	4.37	72.4	4.18
Totals	70.6	6.20	70.8	5.47	70.7	5.85

Results and Discussion

The mean correct discriminations and standard deviations for each group are presented in Table 1. The average score for the entire group was 70.7 (out of a possible 78) with a standard deviation of 5.85. The 6th and 7th grade group had the most variable scores while the 10th, 11th, and 12th grade group had the least variable as indicated by their standard deviations.

Results of an analysis of the differences of the means for the groups, ordered by grade and sex, showed that neither of the main effects or the grade x sex interaction was significant at the 5 per cent level of confidence. These results are presented in Table 2.

would be accepted as "discriminable" if it was confused with any other pattern or itself on 10 per cent or more comparisons. As only five of the tactual patterns used proved discriminble, this study was later repeated using different subjects and different areal patterns for the six poorer stimuli. The sixth ranking pattern was retained in the subsequent study. Using the same criterion of discriminability as was here used, eight patterns were found to qualify. These patterns are illustrated in Figure 1.

Errors made on the "alike" responses were compared with those made on the "not alike" to determine whether the subjects had acquired a set for saying "not alike" as the latter was the correct response 85 per cent of the time. The percentage of errors proved to be the same, 9.3 per cent, for the two different responses In view of this, it is not believed that the subjects subjectively established a "not alike" response set for their responses.

TABLE 2

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF DIFFERENCES AMONG GROUPS BY GRADE AND SEX

Component	*df*	SS	MS	F
Grade	3	261	87	2.64
Sex	1	1	1	.03
G x S	3	131	44	1.33
Error	88	2892	33	
Totals	95	3285		

With 3 and 88 df, an F-ratio of 2.72 is necessary for significance at the 5 per cent level of confidence.

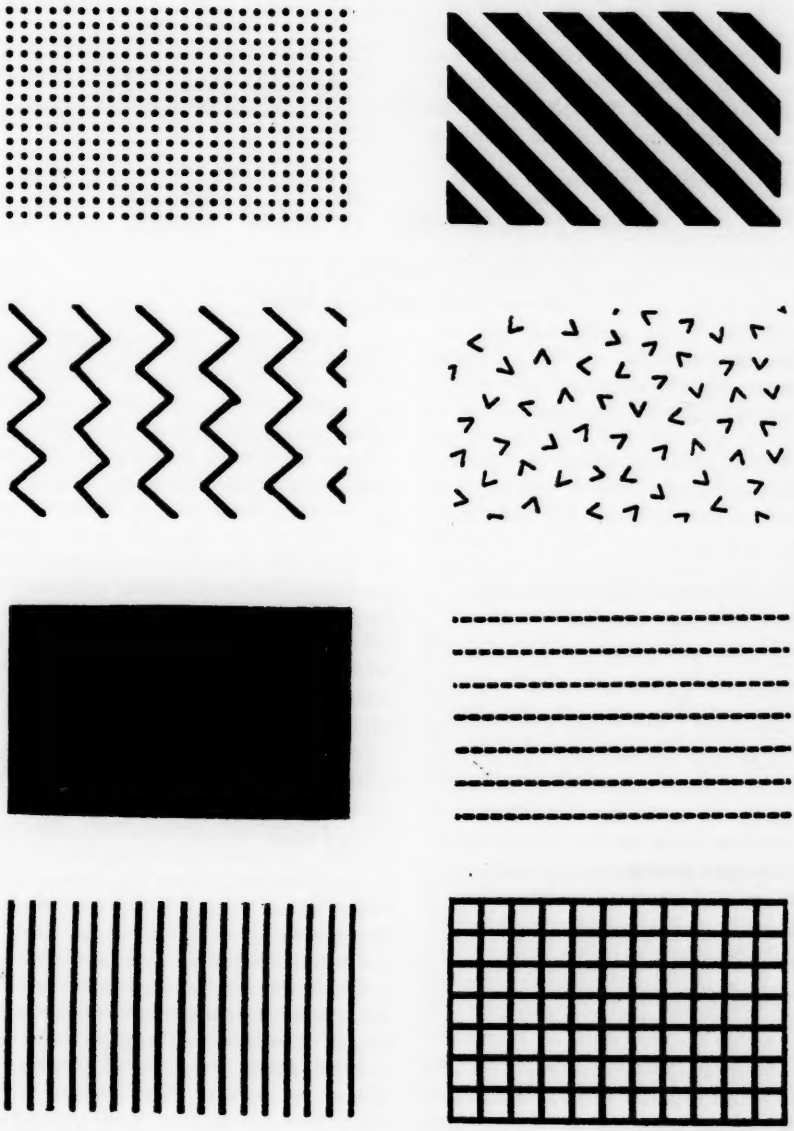
The correlation of the subjects' C. A. with their correct scores yielded a product moment coefficient of correlation of .15 which is not significant at the 5 per cent level of confidence. The correlation of the subjects' IQ scores with their correct scores yielded a product moment coefficient of correlation of .26. This is significant at the 1 per cent level of confidence.

In determining the more discriminable patterns, it was stipulated that no pattern

In order that these areal patterns be used for graphic purposes, it will be necessary to find point and line symbols that can be used with them. As C. A., sex, and grade placement have no significant effect

FIGURE 1

EIGHT DISCRIMINABLE AREAL TACTUAL PATTERNS



on a student's ability to distinguish tactual patterns, products made from Virkotype appear equally useful to students of different ages, sexes, and in different grades.

Summary

Using the method of pair-comparison, ninety-six legally blind students judged the discriminability of twelve tactual patterns. Five patterns were identified as highly discriminable. An identical subsequent experiment led to the identification of three additional discriminable patterns, for a total of eight. Ability to discriminate tactual patterns was not related to sex, grade, or chronological age, but did appear slightly related to intelligence.

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New Printing House Bill

By Edward J. Waterhouse, Litt.D.

Chairman, AAIB Legislative Committee

On September 22, 1961, President Kennedy signed legislation, approved a few days previously by both Houses of Congress, to amend the Act "To Promote the Education of the Blind." The new legislation emerged from various bills which had been proposed by Congressmen Burke of Kentucky and Fogarty of Rhode Island, and Senator Lister Hill of Alabama, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare.

The chief features of the Bill included the removal of the ceiling on the authorization for funds. Prior to this passing, only $410,000 was available annually. Immediately after the Bill was passed, a request for $230,000 more for use by pupils, and a further additional $40,000 for administration purposes, was approved before Congress adjourned.

While this increased appropriation is, of course, important, perhaps more significant in the long run is the change in the law which adds State superintendents of public instruction (or their designees) to membership on the Board of Trustees of the American Printing House for the Blind. This brings to the Printing House the advice and assistance in a formal manner of a new group of persons. Up to the present such trusteeship has been limited to superintendents of the residential schools (and now, also, their designees).

Also, it is now possible for Federal funds, to a limited degree, to be spent by the Printing House in administering the Act. This makes it possible for members of the various standing committees to be reimbursed for their travel expenses in going to Louisville to participate in committee activities. While superintendents have usually found it possible to obtain money for this purpose, this has not always been the case. It would be even more difficult for State superintendents of public instruction, who have many other responsibilities beside the education of the blind, to earmark travel funds for this purpose. It should now be possible for the Printing House to obtain the assistance of leaders in all branches of education of blind youth.

It will take a year or more for the effects of this Bill to become apparent. The new Act will not and cannot solve all the problems of distributing educational materials to blind youth, but it is an intelligent step in the right direction and, as such, should have the approval of all concerned.

The President's Corner

By Miss Lois V. Cox, President
American Association of Instructors of the Blind

What Is Your Score?

Every minute of every hour of every day of our lives is so crowded with activity that it is necessary to make a time to evaluate ourselves. As we rush from 1961 into 1962, let us pause long enough to look at ourselves and see how we score as professional workers in the field of education of visually handicapped children.

1. Are we members of professional organizations which offer opportunities for professional growth: the Council for Exceptional Children, the American Association of Instructors of the Blind? (1962 would be an excellent year to become a Life Member.)

2. Are we certified by the American Association of Instructors of the Blind? (Mr. Maurice Olsen has the information on how this can be done.)

3. Are we actively participating in all conferences, regional workshops and conventions? (It is not too early to make plans to attend the AAIB Convention at the Deauville Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida, June 28 - July 2, 1962.)

4. Are we doing regular and extensive professional reading in the area of general education as well as in our specialized field to keep informed on developments in research, new materials available, new ideas to consider and new methods to try? (Setting aside an hour a day for professional reading will help to accomplish this.)

5. Are we writing articles for professional magazines to give others the benefit of our knowledge and experiences? (Mr. Heisler will welcome contributions to the *International Journal.*)

6. Are we taking courses which will help us to do our jobs more efficiently? (There is so much for all of us to learn in this exciting age in which we live.)

7. Are we using what we learn creatively? (It is not enough to learn. With our background of knowledge, we must create.)

8. Are we insisting upon high standards of performance in reading and writing and mathematics? (We will get the kind of work which we expect from our children. If we are willing to accept inaccurate reading, writing and computation, that is what we will get. We must keep our standards high.)

9. Have we been good salesmen? (What we say about our profession can help recruit quality teachers.)

10. Are we taking time to enjoy life? (Read a book just for fun! Spend an evening with people you enjoy! Go to a concert! Play golf or tennis! You will do a better job tomorrow if you do.)

What is your score? Mine tells me that I should constantly evaluate myself and work toward professional improvement.

Practices in Teaching Orientation, Mobility, and Travel*

By Don L. Walker, Principal

Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

One of the most important, and often most loosely organized, areas of the education of visually handicapped children has been orientation and mobility. More and more, educators of visually handicapped children have become aware of the urgent need for evaluation and adjustment of programs in this area, and there is now a desire to do things about it on a national scale. For this reason, the AAIB at its 1960 convention in Nashville, Tennessee, officially recognized a **Mobility Workshop** as a permanent department of the Association.

In the spring of 1960, the Central Curriculum Committee of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School decided to make orientation and mobility its major project for the 1960-61 school year. Consequently, when the people of the Mobility Workshop decided that there was a need to begin their work with a survey of practices in teaching orientation, mobility, and travel throughout the United States, the Iowa group accepted the responsibility to conduct such a survey.

The committee limited the survey to "organized" programs in orientation and mobility, that is, programs wherein a definite plan is followed, with regularly scheduled classes or lessons at a given grade level.

Questionnaires were sent to 45 residential schools, and 25 public school systems. Replies were received from 41 residential schools and 17 day schools. Twenty-eight residential and 4 day schools replied that they had organized programs of orientation and mobility, while 13 of each answered that they had no such programs. Four of the residential schools stated that, although they had no program within the school, instruction in some areas of mobility is available from an agency outside the school.

Although the survey was designed to determine practices in organized programs, the committee was aware of the fact that in many schools excellent work is being done in programs which are set up on a more or less informal basis. However, it is encouraging that quite a sizeable number of schools actually do have organized programs at some or all levels. Furthermore, replies received in the survey indicate that there is a definite trend in residential schools toward more carefully defined and more highly organized programs.

Day school replies indicate the same trend, on a lesser scale, toward organization of programs. In many respects, the day schools have the opportunity to provide greater motivation and more realistic settings than do residential schools. The need is always present and obvious in the average day school program, and perhaps more should be done in this area.

There is some indication of the recognition of the need for development of orientation and travel skills for those children with some useful vision as well as those who are, for all practical purposes, blind. In 6 of the responding schools,

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* A summary of the results of a survey conducted by the Central Curriculum Committee of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, under the auspices of the AAIB Mobility Workshop.

One copy of the complete report of the survey has been sent to each of the schools which participated. Additional copies will be furnished at 20c each, to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Address requests to: Don L. Walker, Principal, Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School, Vinton, Iowa.

special attention is given to the problems of the partially seeing child.

The greatest paucity of organized programs is at the primary level in the residential schools, indicating the need for more work in this area. This can be partially explained if we accept the assumption that a considerable amount of effective, informal teaching is being done at the primary and intermediate levels. Nevertheless, chances are that better organization of these programs would lead to more consistent success.

Individual instruction is preferred by a wide margin at the upper grade levels, with group instruction being considered chiefly for the lower grades. Perhaps more consideration should be given for both group instruction at the upper grade levels, and individual instruction at the lower grade levels, in addition to present practices.

Generally speaking, the time allotted is not consistent with the importance assigned to orientation and mobility by most authorities in the field. Responses from the majority of the schools in the survey indicated that each child spends less than two hours per week on orientation and mobility. Furthermore, insufficient time was the reason the responding administrators most frequently gave for lack of success of their programs. It would appear that administrators should accept responsibility for more generous allotments of time for the teaching of orientation and mobility.

The wide variation in the amounts of training of those who teach in this field indicates the need for more carefully defined standards to be met by teachers. One of the most important requisites of a good program in orientation, mobility, and travel, as established by the replies on this survey, is a well-qualified teacher. However, in view of the fact that nearly all schools in the study have orientation and mobility being taught on a part-time basis by physical education teachers, classroom teachers, and others, one must assume that these teachers were hired chiefly on the basis of qualifications other than training in orientation and mobility. This, also, is inconsistent with the vital importance of this portion of the blind child's education.

Apparently, the administrators of most of the schools reporting feel that vision is one of the most essential characteristics in a mobility teacher. Thirty-five of the teachers mentioned in the survey have normal or partial vision. A few of the respondents expressed the opinion that a normally sighted teacher is one of the essentials to a good program. One replied that a totally blind instructor is a must.

For cane travel, the long cane apparently is becoming the standard, although a limited number of schools harbor strong feelings in favor of some type of short cane.

A few schools indicated that the teaching of orientation and mobility should be a part of every learning situation, with responsibility to be shared by all staff members. One of the schools, with an organized program of several years' standing, suggested that the trained instructor might be best utilized as a coordinator, or resource person, for the other staff members who would work more closely with the children. This is suggested as a partial solution to the problem of finding sufficient time for the program, as well as an answer to the need for qualified instructors.

There is a need for research which would establish those specific characteristics which must be developed if a blind person is to be a good traveler. Further research also is needed to determine which travel characteristics are teachable, and which are due to innate ability. In addition, there is a need to determine the quantitative and qualitative nature of the teaching being done in the "informal" type of programs.

The replies on the survey indicate that we have been going in many directions in this field. This is fine up to a point, and that point seems to have been reached. Diversification among the schools has provided a wide range of experiences upon which to draw in setting up standards.

It is recommended that the Mobility Workshop at the 1962 Convention be given the responsibility to develop a set of tentative standards, to be used as a guide in setting up programs in the schools. It should answer such questions as: What skills must a blind child learn in order to travel effectively, independently, and unobtrusively? How may these skills be taught? How can study in various subject matter fields contribute to good mobility? What should be the qualifications of the teacher of orientation and mobility? What is his function?

It may be presumptuous to assume that the Mobility Workshop, armed with such a meager bit of information, could establish *standards* for all schools to follow. However, with national concern mounting to a new high, it is time to establish an orientation point from which more permanent standards, based upon the results of further research, may be developed.

Linda Runs Away

By Marvin Gold*, M.A.

There was light knocking at the back door. It was hardly noticeable at first, but it was persistent enough to filter through the noisy hum of the electric fan. Marjie went to the door. "Who's there?" I asked her. I might as well have avoided the effort for silence was the answer to my question. "Marjie," I insisted again, "who's there?" Perhaps six-year-olds-going-on-seven have automatic question filters they employ to screen out useless parental noises, but thirty-four-year-olds-going-on-thirty-five compensate for this quite adequately by repeating the question enough times as is necessary for it to finally break through the childhood sound barrier. Her answer when it came was a simple "Linda". Too simple, as it turned out, for there are probably more Lindas in the neighborhood than Smiths in the telephone directory.

"Linda who?" I could feel the entire process starting all over again. Now I knew exactly how an Aeschylusian character might feel. (I was seriously considering changing my name to Cassandra, for all the attention that was given me.) "Linda who?"

"Linda Forbes." Marjie lost the skirmish. But, I wondered, how long would it be until she finally conceded the war?

"Is she with her mother?"

"No."

"Her father?"

"No."

"Who's with her, then?" I asked through my teeth.

"She's by herself."

Marjie isn't prone to telling lies — at least no more than any other little girl of six — but, I didn't quite believe her now. "By herself?" I got up and went to the door. Sure enough, there was Linda all alone. I apologized to Marjie mentally for having doubted her. But what on earth was Linda doing here and how did she get

*Marvin Gold is a doctoral candidate in special education at George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee.

here? The Forbes lived less than a hundred feet from us. In fact our back yards were adjoining, separated only by two five-feet retaining walls and a wire fence. Yet I was amazed to see that this particular little seven-year-old girl had come visiting all by herself. You see, Linda Forbes was totally blind!

"How did you get here?" I asked her, hoping that my daughter's type of hearing loss was not contagious. Fortunately, it wasn't.

"I climbed up my wall and then I climbed up your wall and then I climbed over the fence," she replied.

"All by yourself?" I asked a bit skeptically.

"Uh-huh."

"Does Mommy know you're here?"

"No. Daddy doesn't know either."

"Don't you think you should have told them? They might worry."

Linda came in. With no apparent difficulty, she walked over to the couch and sat down. The window fan was directly behind her pushing a steady flow of air all about her. "We just got a new fan," she said. That was nice but it wasn't exactly the answer to my question. "It used to be very hot in our house, but now it's nice and cool." (A little girl is a little girl is a little girl.) "I like it blowing on me." (Frustration, thy name is female.)

"That's nice, Linda. But, don't you think that you should have told someone that you came for a visit?"

"Oh, I'm not visiting."

"Oh?"

"No. I ran away."

"You ran away?" I smiled. A hundred feet wasn't much of a run-away. Then I started to think about it. A hundred feet, a wire fence, and a couple of stone walls for a little blind girl shouldn't be smiled away too lightly. "Why did you run away?" I asked with a little more respect in my voice.

It all came out then. How Bob, her father, had told her to go out and play on the swing and how Linda didn't feel like playing outside just then. ("I don't like to exercise all the time.") How he insisted and she refused. ("I told him I didn't want to do it.") How he had gotten angry and finally spanked her. ("That's the first time he hit me all summer.") How she decided that it would be a wise move to leave home. ("I never ran away before.") How stone walls do not a prison make. ("I just put a stool next to it and climbed up.")

She continued the play-by-play description of this most exciting adventure, obviously relishing every daring detail. When she had completed the entire tale, I asked her if she planned to return home someday. I tried hard to keep the smile out of my voice. "I'm going back in a couple of minutes," she answered. Her manner pointedly told me that my question was far from intelligent. "But first can I play with some of Marjie's toys?"

Linda got up, indicating by her rise that the interview was over and that no more information would be forthcoming. She followed Marjie's voice into the bedroom, amazingly avoiding all the furniture that outmaneuvers me at night when I decide to walk through the apartment without turning on the lights. She was equally adept at avoiding the projecting wall and half-open door.

I sat back. The entire episode so intrigued me that I delightfully pushed the mental playback button in order to enjoy again that which had just transpired. Squeals of little girl laughter came floating back to the living room, interrupting, yet accenting my reverie.

* * * *

"I've returned your daughter, you brute. I heard how a young lady isn't safe within miles of your horrible temper." Bob winked at me. Linda smiled knowingly and then skipped off, heading straight for those very swings that were the cause of the incident.

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"I've returned your daughter, you brute. I heard how a young lady isn't safe within miles of your horrible temper." Bob winked at me. Linda smiled knowingly and then skipped off, heading straight for those very swings that were the cause of the incident.

After I told Bob what had happened, a strange pleasant look appeared on his face. A peacock had nothing on him at that moment. I wasn't quite sure, however, just what emotions he was experiencing. I couldn't tell whether it was pride or joy or a wonderful combination of the two that caused him to radiate that way — for radiate, he did. Regardless of what those feelings might have been, I still knew that there weren't many parents around that could have been more thrilled with having a little girl who felt independent enough to run away.

TO PUT IT BRIEFLY

News and Views from the Field

Journalistic adage: "Be brisk, be brief, be bright, be right!"

New Schools for the Dakotas

North Dakota School

By Herbert D. Jeffrey, Superintendent

The new $550,000 North Dakota School for the Blind in Grand Forks, North Dakota, opened September 11, 1961 with 32 pupils enrolled. The school is located on a beautiful 10-acre tract of land which is northwest of the University of North Dakota campus. It consists of two buildings, a single-story administration-and-classroom structure and a two-story dormitory. The school was formerly located at Bathgate, North Dakota, a small community in the northeastern corner of the state.

Construction of the new school was started in the fall of 1959, and the buildings were substantially completed in December, 1960. It was planned to move at that time from the former school at Bathgate, but a delay in getting sewage connections forced postponement until this fall.

The new school can accommodate up to 50 pupils. The two-story dormitory houses the girls on the first floor and the boys on the second floor. In addition to the bedrooms, there are apartments for housemothers on each floor, living rooms, recreation rooms, and utility rooms.

The one-story administration-and-classroom building contains eight classrooms, a library, administrative offices, dining room, kitchen, laundry and music rooms.

The dormitory building measures 145′ by 50′ and the administration-and-classroom building 265′ x 60′. Heat for the new school is provided by the University of North Dakota power plant.

The new school was built with $450,000 appropriated through an initiated measure approved by the voters in 1958 and an additional $100,000 appropriated by the 1959 Legislature.

The former school at Bathgate served blind children of North Dakota for 53 years. During these years, there were only two superintendents. The late B. P. Chapple was Superintendent from the time the school opened until 1937. The present Superintendent, Herbert D. Jeffrey, was appointed in August, 1937.

*South Dakota School**

By Walter A. Hack, Superintendent

The South Dakota School for the Blind moved into its new plant at Aberdeen, South Dakota, at the beginning of the current school year. Its former location was Gary, where it was established in 1900. Erected at a cost of $800,000 it consists of what may be described as twelve buildings under one roof.

The thinking in planning this type of building was to eliminate the necessity for children putting on warm clothing to go from one building to another, such as from the dormitory to the classroom and dining room, etc. Also this particular type of structure is easier to heat, keep clean and maintain.

The largest room in the school is the library which includes book storage, tables, magnifiers, and talking books for study purposes. There are four classrooms for both Braille and sight-saving departments at the elementary level, plus four additional classrooms for junior and senior high school use. In addition there is a science laboratory and a homemaking unit.

A vocational department offers facilities for instruction in woodwork, leather tooling, plastics, ceramics, chair caning, and rug weaving.

The music department consists of two large rooms for band and chorus rehearsals and several soundproof rooms which are used for practicing. These latter rooms are connected to the music supervisor's office by a public address system which makes it possible to tell when students are practicing.

There are separate dormitories for older boys and girls, each having a capacity of 36 students (two to a room). Each of the buildings contains a lounge, recreation room, and a three-room apartment for houseparents. The six-to-eight-year-old children have a separate dormitory and dining room.

A modern infirmary, consisting of a dispensary, waiting room, two wards and a nurse's apartment, will be used for sick children not requiring hospitalization.

One more building is planned for construction pending appropriation of funds by the State Legislature. This will be known as the Activities Building in which there will be classes in physical education, mobility, and various recreational activities.

Both students and staff are very pleased in their new surroundings and look forward to becoming an integral part of the Aberdeen community.

*NOTE: Reprinted in part from the *Aberdeen American-News*, Aberdeen, S. D., Jan. 29, 1961.

Children of the Silent Night

As announced in *The Lantern* for September 1961, Perkins School for the Blind has produced a new motion picture entitled CHILDREN OF THE SILENT NIGHT, telling the story of its Deaf-Blind Department. This is a 16-mm., sound-and-color film lasting twenty-seven minutes.

This is the second film made in recent years about the School, the first — entitled THE PERKINS STORY which won a Blue Ribbon Award at the 1959 American Film Festival in New York City — is in wide distribution both in the United States and abroad.

This is available in two forms: The first is forty-four minutes long and is in color, the second is twenty-seven minutes for television and is in black-and-white. As an example of the widespread interest in this film, it might be noted that hardly a week goes by but some Channel telecasts this film somewhere in the United States.

CHILDREN OF THE SILENT NIGHT will probably prove equally popular. It has

already appeared on WBZ-TV Channel 4 in Boston and on WGBH-TV Channel 2, and requests from other television stations are coming in. Both of these films can be borrowed by any interested person through the producer, Mr. Robert M. Campbell, Saxtons River, Vermont. There is no charge except for the return postage and insurance. Groups wanting these films should try to give Mr. Campbell as much warning as possible since at times the demand for the available copies is considerable.

In CHILDREN OF THE SILENT NIGHT a small deaf-blind child is shown being introduced to the mysteries of language and speech. During the months when the film was being made, she learned to say her first words, and these are recorded, adding considerable drama to the script.

Edward J. Waterhouse, Litt.D.
Director, Perkins School for the Blind

AFOB Appoints Educational Consultant

Frank L. Franks was assigned as Educational Consultant to the Ministry of Education in Malaya by the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, it was announced on September 5th by M. Robert Barnett, Executive Director. Mr. Franks will reside in Kuala Lumpur, and will remain there for a three-year period, the time required to put the planned program into effect.

Mr. Franks holds a B.A. degree from Piedmont College in Georgia, a Master's Degree from Western Carolina and was awarded a Diploma as Specialist in Education for the Visually Handicapped by George Peabody College in Tennessee. Prior to this appointment, Mr. Franks coordinated the program for visually handicapped students in the public schools of San Diego, California. He also served as an Instructor in English at Piedmont College.

Mr. Frank's three-year assignment includes:

1. A survey of facilities and programs for the blind in the Federation of Malaya with a view toward integrating the blind into the regular city and village schools.

2. To conduct a one-year teacher preparation course for teachers interested in the field of the blind; and

3. To implement the recommendations of the survey and supervise teachers during the initial phase of the program.

Malaya is the first country in Asia whose government officially adopted the policy of integrating blind children into the regular public school system.

During his stay in Malaya, Mr. Franks will train a staff person who will carry on the program when he returns to the American Foundation for Overseas Blind headquarters at the end of the three years.

Eight Steps to Charm

A visitor to the Arkansas School for the Blind, on a morning early last spring, probably would have been surprised to see a group of blind and partially sighted girls practicing modeling stances on the stage of the auditorium. Another day they could be seen through the double glass doors putting on make-up, without the aid of mirrors, or sniffing delightedly at small bottles of perfume and sachet powder.

These and many similar activities were a part of the Ayers Charm Course which was given for the first time last year to the Junior and Senior High School girls as a part of the regularly scheduled Social Adjustment Program.

The course, called "8 Steps to Charm"

(copyright), including eight lessons of forty-five minutes each, was taught by Mrs. John Ayers, Director of the Charm and Modeling School. Mrs. Ayers generously offered the course and later gave a course for pre-teen boys and girls.

Her special objectives in the course for blind girls were to teach grace of motion, speech, and manner. She felt that girls who have vision can see how they look but blind girls must depend on their inner feelings. The charm course was designed to give the blind girl more confidence in facing the future. Posture, poise and personality were stressed.

A part of each lesson was used to teach some specific activity which could be practiced outside class.

Lesson one, on posture, taught the graceful way to sit, stand, walk, and stoop to pick up an object. Actually this was a lesson in modeling so that each girl, while learning good posture, could imagine that she was a beautiful model in a gorgeous gown. You can imagine the results.

Lesson two, on how to step and turn, and go up and down stairs gracefully, had each girl going up and down stairs balancing a book on her head. High heels were worn for part of this lesson. How to get in and out of a car gracefully was given some attention.

In lesson three, a personality analysis was written for each girl, recognizing her good points, telling her how to emphasize them, and suggesting improvements and ways to minimize her less attractive features. Blind girls were told how to achieve a pleasant smile and all were helped to cultivate a good quality of voice in speaking.

Lesson four, on perfume testing, choosing and buying, proved to be a glamorized lesson in disguise on body cleanliness. After choosing the perfume best suited for each girl it was stressed that one should never wear perfume until absolutely free of body odor. Instructions were given in detail for a beauty bath.

Lesson five, on skin care, facials and make-up, was especially good as each girl gave herself a facial and applied suitable make-up under personal instruction.

Lesson six stressed the care of the body with emphasis on hands and feet. How to keep correct weight and body proportions by diet and exercise were also demonstrated.

Lesson seven, on manners for all situations, ended the course, and lesson eight was a review and graduation. Sometimes the course ends with a party or style show.

Interest in the charm course was high throughout, and results were evident for the remainder of the school year.

New hair styles, correct make-up, attention to new fashions, correct dress for occasion, pleasant odors, more pleasant facial expressions, better diction and voice quality, and decidedly more grace in movement resulted from the course. But more than anything else, the course was valuable for the self-confidence and assurance that each girl seemed to feel as she held her head a little higher, walked a little taller, and smiled a little sweeter and was glad that she was a girl.

Mrs. Eula Shults
Home Economics Teacher
Arkansas School for the Blind

New Teachers of Blind Learning with Blindfolds

In order that four young men may learn just how the blind person feels in moving about a room, his yard or a downtown street, they are donning blindfolds and with a "long cane" are stepping out into Kalamazoo.

They are the first of graduate students

at Western Michigan University participating in a unique program in Western's new "Center for Orientation and Mobility".

Donald Blasch, Director of the Center, explains that the blind must first orient themselves, using their remaining senses, so that they can quickly establish where they are, whether in the home or on the street. Later, using the "long cane", they learn how to maneuver about any area, knowing where they are and where they want to be.

The Center was established this year through a grant from the U. S. Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and is being operated in close cooperation with the Veterans Administration hospital at Hines, Ill. For an initial five-year period graduate students will spend two semesters on the Western campus and one semester of practical experience at the Hines hospital, then receiving a Master of Arts degree.

In order that these students may in turn teach the blind, they must know how the blind feel, points out Blasch, and thus they will spend about an hour and a half each day walking Kalamazoo's streets with an instructor trailing them to help them in learning this mobility.

Following the four students will be Stanley Suterko, who was a master orienter at Hines hospital. Thus, he will spend about six hours a day walking, as students must work alone and not have another student to depend on.

Blasch quickly points out that there is a place for both this training and for guide dog work, but that this new program teaches many techniques that can also be well used by persons with dogs. Thus, new avenues of communication and mobility are being opened for America's 350,000 blind.

Russell A. Strong
Publicity Director
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan

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